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# POEMS

*By*

*ERNEST POWELL*

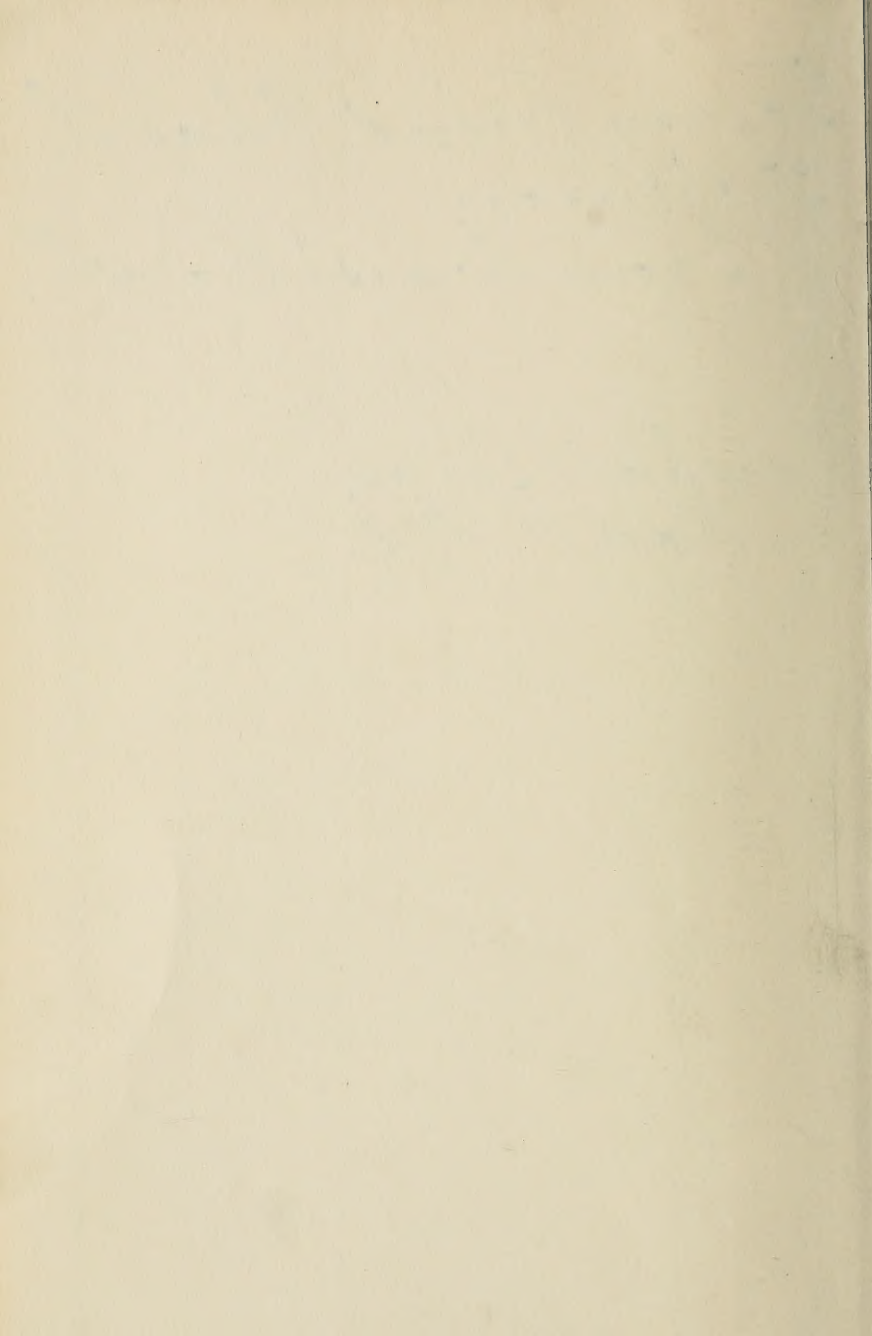


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To my friend, Chas. L.  
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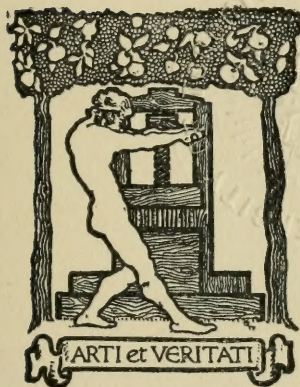
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# POEMS

ERNEST POWELL



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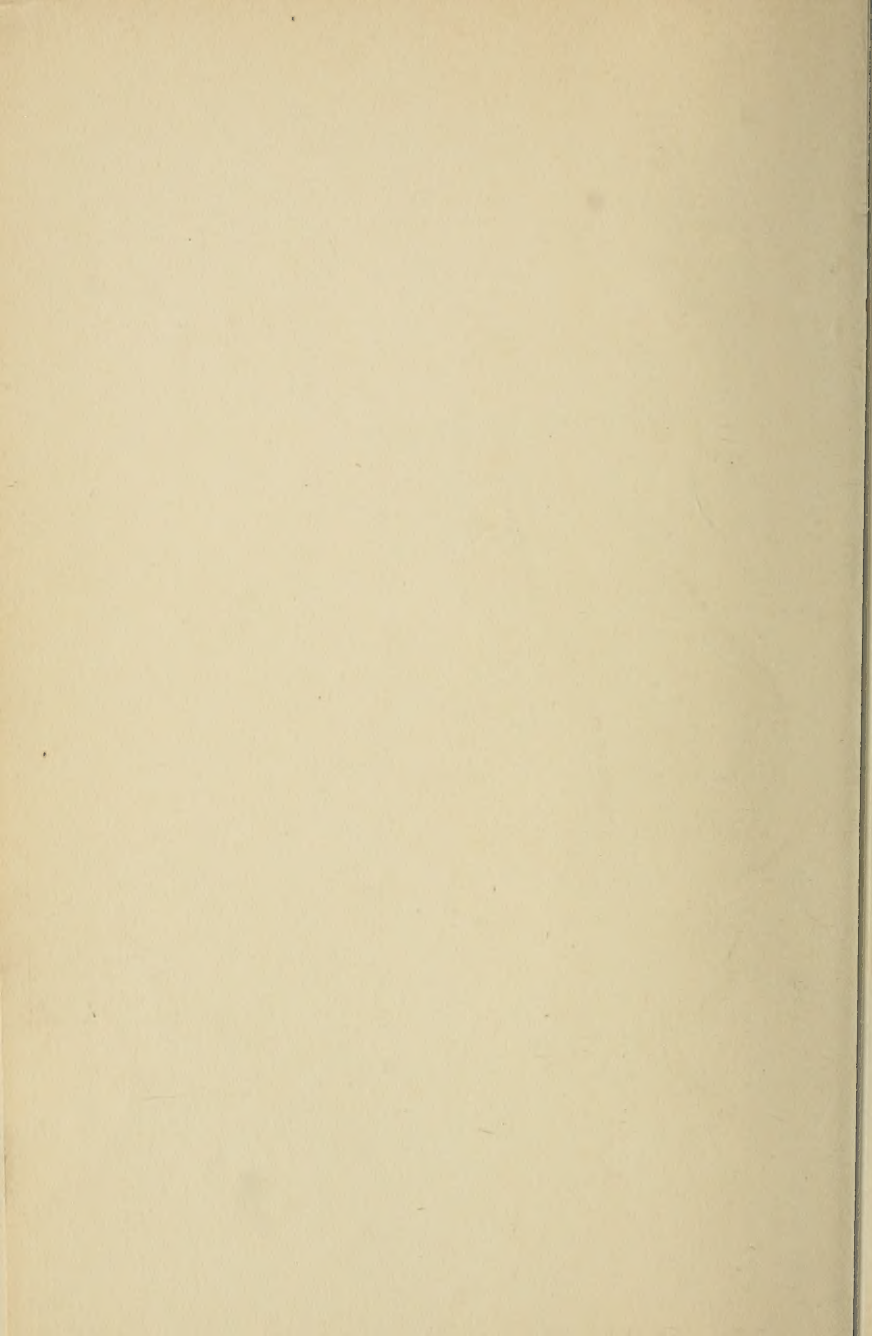
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THE GORHAM PRESS, BOSTON, U. S. A.

*To the Memory*  
*of*  
*My Mother*



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## POEMS



## MY POEM

---

If there is naught in anything I write,  
Of truth or joy, or hope beyond the grave,  
Then let it sink, all sink, beneath time's wave,  
And from men's eyes be buried out of sight;  
But if like knights of old in armor bright,  
My thoughts go forth to comfort and to save,  
To shield the weak from harm, to cheer the  
    brave,  
Then let them live and gather strength and  
    might.  
The fate of what I sing I know is just,  
Whate'er it be, whate'er that fate may be;  
And so I am content, for life is sweet,  
And so I sing because I must—I must;  
When beauty takes my hand and walks with  
    me,  
My heart must either sing or cease to beat.

## JOY OF LIFE.

---

A thousand hopes are budding in my heart,  
As roses bud in June, and countless joys  
Go singing through my soul, as happy birds  
Go piping through the world. In love with  
life,

The whole green earth becomes a vital thing,  
And beauty reaches up from clod to star,  
And glory, like a monarch's robe of state,  
Is thrown in shining folds about the globe.  
I cannot pine for olden times and seers,  
And miss the joy of living well to-day;  
I dare not yearn for future days to come,  
And lose the bliss the present offers me.  
The ancients owned the past, and filled it well;  
'Tis now my turn to brim the present up;  
And brim it up I shall with joy and song—  
Ay, even as a jar is filled with wine! 3  
Some other day 'twas Plato's time to think,  
Some other day 'twas Shakespeare's time to  
sing;  
'Tis now my time, and think and sing I must,  
Or miss the very heart of happiness;  
'Tis now my time, and live and love I must,  
Or forfeit all my rights to vital joy;  
And wheresoever placed beneath the sun,  
In Marshall or in Rome, it matters not—  
In India or Greece, 'tis all the same—

Wherever green things grow and men are found,  
Content am I to toil and hope and dream;  
Content am I to live and love and sing.  
I press my face among the lilac blooms,  
And know that life is sweeter far than they;  
I stretch my arms and clasp the mighty trees,  
And know that life is stronger far than oaks;  
I gaze at stars that seem so far away,  
And know that life is higher far than stars;  
And last of all and best of all on earth,  
I look into the hearts and souls of men,  
And know beyond all doubt that life is good,  
Containing mighty forces yet untried.  
I let the fairest blossoms fall to earth,  
To take the little hands of boys and girls;  
I turn from stars to read a shining face;  
I leave my prayers to talk with God in men.  
What need to know the source of life, its cause ?  
Fulfilling function here is wisdom's crown:  
What need to know life's destiny, its end ?  
To live completely now is bliss supreme!

## EARTH SONG.

---

Sunlight and starlight, moonlight and dreaming,  
Earth, thou art beautiful—real, not seeming;  
Leaf-green thou art, and ocean-green too,  
Snow-white thou art, and violet blue;  
Beautiful earth, thou art real, not seeming!

Bird-song and wind-song, love-song and dream-  
ing,  
Earth, thou art glorious—real, not seeming;  
Rose-sweet thou art, and music-sweet, too,  
Life-sweet, and wine-sweet, and sweet through  
and through;  
Glorious earth, thou art real, not seeming!

Man-love and woman-love, love and its dream-  
ing,  
Earth, thou art ravishing—real, not seeming;  
Life thou hast given me, ecstasy too;  
Books thou hast blest me with, friends who  
are true—  
Ravishing earth, thou art real, not seeming!

“THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND  
AND WAIT.”

---

How patiently the lame child waits for me  
To bear him forth beneath the spreading tree;  
And every morn I stoop and kiss his cheek,  
And pray for greater strength to help the weak;  
And every day I whisper soon and late,  
“They also serve who only stand and wait.”

How gratefully the blind girl takes my hand,  
When forth I lead her through the pleasant  
land;  
And ever at my heart a prayer I find,  
For surer strength to lead aright the blind;  
And every day I whisper soon and late,  
“They also serve who only stand and wait.”

How trustingly upon my shoulder now  
My mother leans, with peace upon her brow;  
And gently smoothing back her snow-white  
hair,  
I pray that I may shield her from all care;  
And o’er and o’er I whisper soon and late,  
“They also serve who only stand and wait.”

## LINES TO A VIOLIN

---

Like one who seeks a cloistered cell,  
His sins on bended knees to tell,  
I come to thee, with brimming heart,  
For thou my true confessor art,  
Sweet violin, sweet violin.

I tell thee all, I tell thee all—  
My joys and sorrows, great and small;  
And thou alone of all thy kind  
Canst tranquilize my heart and mind,  
Sweet violin, sweet violin.

No master I, to sway the crowd,  
With wild cascade of music loud,  
But here between my garret walls,  
I come to thee when twilight falls,  
Sweet violin, sweet violin.

I touch thee as a lover might  
His lady's hand, all snowy white;  
I take thee in my arms and press  
Thy form with many a fond caress,  
Sweet violin, sweet violin.

My pent-up tears unseen can flow,  
While thou art singing soft and low—  
Ay, grief that I have stayed for years

Can freely vent itself in tears,  
Sweet violin, sweet violin.

Thou art my truer, higher self,  
That dreams no dream of fame, of pelf;  
And oh, I come with brimming heart,  
For thou my true confessor art,  
Sweet violin, sweet violin!

## LIFE

---

These books around my study wall  
Are very dear—I love them all;  
These pictures scattered through my room,  
Good comrades they, that banish gloom;  
But even books and even art,  
Can they quite fill—quite fill the heart?

There's something back of books, I know,  
That makes the wording shine and glow;  
There's something back of art, I'm sure,  
A thousand times more fair and pure—  
Can words, can paint e'er satisfy  
A living soul, a seeing eye?

You think that Socrates could find  
Enough in books for heart and mind?  
Could mighty Caesar sit at home,  
Though bloody plots were rife in Rome?  
And what would Dante, Milton mean,  
Had they not lived and wrought and seen?

If peerless Shakespeare lived to-day,  
I think he'd smile and turn away  
From books and pictures, ink and pen,  
And plunge in life, to live with men;  
Could any volume tie him down  
From active life in London town?

These books around my study wall  
Are very dear—I love them all;  
These pictures scattered through my room,  
Good comrades they, that banish gloom;  
But even books and even art  
Can never fill—quite fill the heart.

## MOTTO FOR THE NEW CENTURY

---

I've carved above my cottage door  
A motto for the century;  
And all who pass its threshold o'er  
May read and enter joyfully.

My door forever stands ajar,  
To welcome men, both great and small;  
It matters not from whence they are,  
A cheerful home awaits them all.

The miserable, the mean, the blind,  
The rich, the poor, the high, the low,  
A royal welcome all shall find,  
And loving care each one shall know.

In other walks and spheres in life,  
I might have been a beggar too;  
Then why not lend in times of strife,  
A hand to help my brothers through?

I might have been in other spheres,  
A branded felon, shunned by all;  
Then why not through these coming years  
Support the feeble ones who fall?

I've carved above my cottage door  
This motto: "You are welcome here;"  
And all who pass its threshold o'er  
May read and enter, filled with cheer.

## SABINE BOAT SONG

---

The moon above, like a maiden in love,  
Looks timidly down at her face in the stream,  
While together we two in our open canoe,  
Glide away from the shore, in a dream, in  
a dream,  
Glide away from the shore in a dream.

With the moon overhead and the stars overhead,  
And the moon and the stars in the mirroring  
stream,  
Oh, love, we will float in our Indian boat,  
Away from the world, in a dream, in a dream,  
Away from the world in a dream.

Oh, hark to the song, as we hurry along,  
The song from the cypress that leans to the  
stream;  
'Tis the same magic bird that the Indians heard,  
And called it the bird of a dream, of a dream,  
And called it the bird of a dream.

Oh, love, it is here, in the Southland dear,  
That the waters are sweetest in life's deep  
stream;  
It is here that we, 'neath the orange tree,  
Will make it come true,—our dream, our  
dream,—  
Will make it come true,—our dream!

## IMPROVISATION

### *Christmas Morn.*

---

Ye organ stops, arranged on either hand,  
Divinely sweet, majestic, pure and grand,  
Oh, sing for me as ye have never done!  
Oh, sing, ye organ voices, every one!  
For lo! upon this golden sunlit morn  
The Nazarene, the Prince of Peace, is born!

Ye stops, that Bach and Handel knew so well,  
Ye stops, o'er which blind Milton loved to dwell,  
Combine for me your purest, deepest chords,  
To praise the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords;  
Combine your richest melodies this morn  
For lo! the Prince of Peace on earth is born!

Friend stops, I love ye well and ye love me;  
Then heed my touch, and let your music be  
A psalm of praise to him whose listening ear  
Is ever earthward bent, sweet songs to hear.  
Oh, sing, friend stops, upon this Christmas  
morn,  
For lo! the Prince of Peace, the Christ, is born!

## AT THE ORGAN

---

All discord now is left behind,  
All civil strife of heart and mind,  
And naught exists on earth for me,  
Save harmony, pure harmony.

The cruel word, the poisoned dart,  
No longer pierce and wound my heart,  
For here my soul is doubly sure  
Of all things high, of all things pure.

I dream again my dreams of good,  
I stand where holy men have stood,  
And thrilled with aspirations high,  
I reach the foot of Sinai.

From crag to crag, from height to height,  
I climb to realms of purer light,  
Until on music's highest peak  
I pause with awe, to hear God speak.

\* \* \* \* \*

And now that He has given me  
His written law of harmony,  
I go my way among all men,  
To redeliver it again.

What eye has seen, what ear has heard,  
I must declare in life, in word;  
I go e'en now, I leave the keys,—  
To live, to be, my harmonies!

## FROM THE ORGAN LOFT.

---

Like one within a pictured hall,  
Where every type of life is hung,  
I gaze below unseen by all,  
On men and women, old and young.

The great wide world in miniature  
Now hangs before my eager sight;  
I see the young with faces pure,  
I see the old with locks snow white.

The sign of grief, the mark of care  
The stamp of sin in thought and life,  
I see below me everywhere—  
A face of peace next one of strife,

The widow kneels behind the bride,  
The babe is on its mother's lap,  
The young girl smiles in beauty's pride,  
The old man takes his Sabbath nap.

The student glows with youthful fire,  
Beneath the speaker's upward flight;  
The saint is touched with high desire,  
He longs, he prays, for light, more light.

At last, I turn and touch the keys—  
They answer me, they know me well,

And through the church deep harmonies  
Of praise and love begin to swell.

In peace the people all depart,  
The young, the old, the great, the small—  
But whether weak or strong in heart,  
Oh, there is One who cares for all!

## MAN

---

Sublimity is yours, ye mountains high,  
And on your brows ye wear it like a crown;  
Yet ye are naught, compared to him whose mind  
Can rear up peaks of thought that touch the stars;  
And beautiful ye are, with snow-fed streams  
That flash like jewels in the morning light,  
And strong ye are with mountain oaks and pines,  
That face the winds and storms like heroes old;  
And yet your snow-fed streams and mountain  
trees,

Oh, what are they compared to bards and seers?

One Homer can outflash your opal streams,

One Socrates is stronger than your oaks:

And ye, ye restless seas that ever roar,

And dash your waves against the jagged rocks—

What music can ye make that can compare

With Job's immortal strain, or David's song?

And even thou thyself, O Mother Earth,

Who art the tender nurse of living things,

What wouldst thou be without thy darling child,

Whose hands can sow and reap, whose mind can  
rule?

Thy waters teem with fish, thy groves with birds;

The very ground is paved with precious stones;

And yet without a living, conscious soul,

To delve, to name, to classify, to rule,

What meaning would it have, what signify?

Remove from thee, O Earth, the works of man,  
And thou wouldst be a wilderness again,  
A place devoid of temple, school and home.  
What wouldst thou be without the chosen one,  
Who taught the youth of Athens long ago?  
What wouldst thou be without the Holy One,  
Who walked by Galilee and healed the sick?  
O bloom of blooms! O fruit of fruits! O Man!—  
Cathedral-building, music-making Man!  
Thy past is filled with statues, pictures, books,  
That beautify the world and make it home;  
And on this past thy future shall uprise,  
More splendid still, as day surpasses night.  
If there are no more continents to find,  
What then? Are there not many stars unknown?  
If Greece and Italy have chiseled well,  
And painted well, and sung immortal songs,  
What then? Are there no other songs to sing,  
As glorious as ever yet were sung?  
Are there no scenes to tempt the painter's brush?  
Are there no forms to tempt the sculptor's hand?  
Has even Shakespeare said the final word  
Concerning life? Is there naught else to say?  
Is there naught else to do upon the earth,  
To make it purer, sweeter, more like home?  
Is law as just as law can be? Is truth  
An open, daylight thing that all hearts love?  
O bloom of blooms! O fruit of fruits! O Man!—  
Cathedral-building, nature-ruling Man!  
Thou art the one important fact in time,  
Thou art the only good, the only bad!

And more and more thou shalt subdue the bad,  
And more and more thou shalt exalt the good;  
As light and heat must come from star and sun,  
The beautiful, the good, must come from thee!

## TO FATE

---

What though thy hand be placed upon my brow,  
Restraining me in what I long to do,  
In life and art, in all things good and true?  
O Fate, I'll never yield to thee, I vow;  
And though thy cruel hand be heavy now,  
I'll stand erect beneath the heavens blue,  
And struggle on with hope and courage new;  
For even thou my spirit canst not cow!  
I'll stand in rags beneath the stars of night,  
And sing my song of triumph loud and clear!  
I'll drag my broken body to the light  
Of God's eternal sun, devoid of fear!  
And oh, I'll wage with thee a lifelong fight,  
And through it all, O Fate, I'll persevere!

## PERSEVERANCE

---

I travel on in deep serenity,  
Along the highway leading to the sun,  
Unmindful of the little paths that run  
To right and left; such paths are not for me.  
And though men sing full many a melody,  
Enticing me to stay until they're done,  
I pass them by, and all their pleasures shun,  
For lo! I must fulfill my destiny!  
I travel on, regarding not the strife  
Of selfish men who labor day and night  
To carry out their little aims in life;  
I travel on, because I love the light;  
And even though I fall with work half-done,  
In death they'll find my face still towards the  
sun.

## FRIENDSHIP

---

Shall all the words of true affection fail,  
Which I have spoken many times to him?  
Shall all the past, the lifelike past, grow dim,  
And like the waning moon turn deadly pale?  
Shall music singing like a nightingale,  
And poems read, and stories wild and grim,  
Not speak one clear convincing word to him,  
Of something sure in life that must avail?  
Perhaps at midnight when he sees a star,  
The clear convincing word of love shall come;  
Perhaps at noon, or when the sun sets pure,  
The high convincing word shall come from  
far:  
Though late or soon, the word I know shall  
come,  
To prove that love is sure, as God is sure.

## TO SIDNEY LANIER

---

Although the South has never raised to thee  
A monument of stone that shall endure,  
She loves thee none the less, thou poet pure,  
And in her homes she keeps thy minstrelsy.  
Although thy name is carved in majesty  
Above no college hall, young men to lure,  
Yet in thy native land thy fame is sure,  
And shall be surer still in years to be.  
Thou hast a monument not made with hands,  
That grows in strength and beauty day  
by day;  
Thou hast a fame well based on life and art,  
That shall increase and conquer other lands;  
But even more than all, thou hast for aye  
A place, sweet bard, within the South's  
great heart.

## TO HENRY TIMROD

---

Sweet southern bard, thy songs are tinted  
shells,  
Cast high upon the golden sands of time,  
And bending low to catch their mournful rhyme,  
I muse on ocean caves and pearl-strewn cells.  
What sad and sea melody is this that wells  
From out their colored depths—what hint  
of crime—  
What muffled chords of strife in marching  
time  
Are these that o'er my spirit cast their spells?  
O bard, thy well-beloved south to-day  
In beauty stands erect, and year by year  
Her tender love shall grow in strength for thee,  
For thou didst comfort her when skies were gray,  
And oh, in peace or war, unto her ear  
She holds thy pearly shell of poesy!

## TO ELWOOD

---

Friend Elwood, oftentimes I think of thee,  
And picture thee beside the master's chair,  
With manuscript or some old volume rare  
Spread out to read upon thine ample knee;  
And whensoever this picture comes to me,  
I bless thy name with something like a prayer;  
For thou didst read to him with loving care,  
Ay, thou didst prompt an epic melody!  
A privilege divine thou didst enjoy,  
For which a king might well give up his crown;  
Sweet music touched thine ear without alloy,  
Enough to call the starry angels down;  
And high on fame's great roll thy name I find,  
Because to sightless Milton thou wert kind!

## TO A YOUNG GIRL

---

Unfolding like a bud beneath the sun,  
My child, thou growest fairer day by day,  
And seeing thee my lips unbidden say,  
“Through life be innocent as now, sweet  
one.”

Come nearer me, and let my fingers run  
Through silken locks, where sunbeams love  
to play;

My child, thou hast thy angel mother's way,  
And having it, thy life is well begun.  
At daybreak, when the dew is on the rose,  
I plan, I work for thee, where'er thou art;  
At noontime, when the sun in splendor glows,  
I sit and think of thee with all my heart;  
And when, dear child, the stars are over me,  
I turn my face to God, and pray for thee.

## SEPTEMBER

---

Although my hair is silvered o'er with gray,  
And little children climb upon my knee,  
Yet even now September comes to me,  
And brings each year desire for books and play;  
And as I hear the schoolboys day by day  
Pass by my door with merry songs of glee,  
I wish again that I a child could be,  
And all my present sorrow put away.  
My own neglected books are waiting still,  
Upon a garret table out of sight,  
And sometimes when the children climb the  
    hill  
On which the schoolhouse stands, to read  
    and write,  
I bring them forth, with many a joyous thrill,  
And read them once again with deep delight.

## AUSTIN

*Written for a Reunion of Schoolmates*

---

Perhaps, perhaps we feel for Austin now  
What Grecians felt for Athens, art's first home;  
Perhaps, perhaps we understand somehow  
What Romans must have felt for classic Rome.  
How fair, how fair is Austin, walled around  
By cedared hills, where waters laugh and flow!  
How dear, how dear is Austin, sacred ground,  
Where first the great of earth we learned to know!

'Twas here upon the hills, beside the streams,  
The love of nature filled my glowing heart;  
'Twas here I dreamed my first impassioned  
dreams,  
And thrilled beneath the spell of poets' art;  
'Twas here in Austin, under fragrant trees,  
That Greece, immortal Greece, enslaved me first;  
'Twas here I learned the name of Socrates;  
'Twas here that Homer's music o'er me burst.

The mighty bard of Stratford found me here,  
And peopled youth with friends as real as life;  
I loved with Romeo, knew Hamlet's fear;  
I wept o'er Caesar's clay, Othello's strife;  
And when all things seemed beautiful and young,  
I met sweet Rosalind in boy's attire,

And heard the singing words on Portia's tongue,  
And felt Viola's heart touch mine with fire.

'Twas here that Shelley came, and Poe, and Keats,  
Who scattered lyrics through my early days,  
As April sprinkles earth with nameless sweets,  
As May pours out her gifts in countless ways;  
And he who walked behind a peasant's plow,  
And sang of mice and men and daisies fair,  
Enthralled me here with song, and even now  
His music steals upon me unaware.

From out the golden years of early youth,  
How many voices rise and greet me here;  
Some sing of love, some speak of hope and truth,  
Some cause a smile, and some a sigh, a tear;  
The sacred friendships which were here begun  
With saints and bards, philosophers and seers,  
Have thriven all like flowers in the sun—  
Have thriven—ay! and borne sweet fruit for years.

But more than all, and starlike over all,  
I feel, I feel a nameless love to-day  
For boyhood friends, for comrades great and  
small,  
Who shared for many years both toil and play;  
When life was young and hope went soaring high,  
They overflowed my little world with joy;  
When life grows old apace and time goes by,  
They bless the man through love they bore the  
boy.

Where'er I turn, where'er my footsteps go,  
Sweet memories spring up before my feet,  
Like happy birds that build in grasses low,  
But soar aloft to sing their carols sweet;  
The very trees that murmur over me  
Have poet tongues my heart can understand;  
A spray of green, or flower from the lea,  
Is like a written page within my hand.

Perhaps, perhaps we feel for Austin now  
What Grecians felt for Athens, art's first home;  
Perhaps, perhaps we understand somehow  
What Romans must have felt for classic Rome.  
How fair, how fair is Austin, walled around  
By cedared hills, where waters laugh and flow;  
How dear, how dear is Austin, sacred ground,  
Where first the great of earth we learned to know!

## LINES TO AN ORGANIST

---

Like sunbeams shining through a window glass,  
Thy thoughts of heaven through sweet music  
pass;

O master, thou dost touch the organ keys,  
As David touched his harp a king to please.

A few sweet velvet tones are heard at first,  
And then what chords upon the senses burst!  
Above the roar of wheels that never cease,  
Oh, thou dost loudly sing of love and peace.

And many weary people hear thy voice,  
And deep within their hearts they all rejoice;  
Men turn their faces toward this holy spot,  
And even skeptics pray, and know it not.

Unknown to thee, full many a ragged boy  
Steals in, and sheds a tear for very joy;  
Unknown to thee, men purer, stronger grow,  
While thou art improvising soft and low.

Oh, thou dost touch with love the organ keys,  
Dost banish strife with solemn harmonies;  
And through it all, the skill, the perfect art,  
Men feel, O master, feel thy great warm heart!

## TO INEZ

*(Tuesday, February 26th)*

---

While resting to-day on a fallen tree,  
In the depths of a leafless wood,  
I heard the first wild rhapsody  
Of spring, and my soul understood.

'Tis winter still, but my heart felt June,  
As I lay in the sun on the tree;  
For I knew that the wild bird's ravish-  
ing tune  
Was sung for his love and for me.

I have come, Inez, from the depths of  
of the grove,  
With my soul full of melody true,  
And my heart full of nameless passion-  
ate love,  
And the song and my love are for you.

## SPRING

---

With a bud in her hand and a song in her mouth,  
She is come, she is here, from her home in the  
south,  
And birds fly before her, and sing as they fly,  
And hope like an angel of glory draws nigh;  
The little blue daisies embroider the ground  
Wherever the print of her sandal is found,  
And buttercups, violets, hyacinths—all,  
Just bloom and bloom where her glances fall,  
And above and below and around and about,  
There steals a thrill no heart can shut out.

A thrill, did I say?—A passionate strife,  
A cry of the soul and the body for life!  
You know how your lips in African sands  
Are parched for the waters of cool green lands;  
You know how your body just aches with pain  
For the gushing fount and the cooling rain;  
The thirst of the desert is naught, I swear,  
To the thirst for life that is everywhere;  
Oh, rapture of raptures, more life to give!  
Oh, glory of glories, to love and to live!

With a rose in her hand and a song in her mouth,  
She is come, she is here, from her home in the  
south,  
And birds fly before her and sing as they fly,

And hope like an angel of glory draws nigh;  
The soft tender grass that carpets the ground  
Is a proof that the root of things is sound;  
The little green buds are a sign to me  
That the heart of things is as true as can be;  
And I know—I know, by the light from above,  
That back of it all there is life, there is love!

## AT SUNRISE

### *Matins*

---

Another day is now begun,  
And as I see the rising sun  
I praise Thy name, O Lord above,  
And ask Thee now for strength and love,  
In Christ's dear name.

Another day I have from Thee,  
In which to labor joyfully;  
Direct me, Lord, in everything,  
In what I do, in what I sing,  
In Christ's dear name.

Another day, another day,—  
Oh, show me, gracious Lord, the way  
In which to do more good, far more,  
Than ever I have done before,  
In Christ's dear name.

Another day is now begun,  
And as I see the rising sun,  
I praise Thy name, O Lord above,  
And ask Thee now for strength and love,  
In Christ's dear name.

## AT SUNSET

### *Vespers*

---

O Lord, if I have sinned to-day,  
By word or thought in any way,  
I ask Thee now on bended knee  
That Thou wilt hear and pardon me,  
In Christ's dear name.

Or if to-day I've selfish been,  
By thoughtlessness to brutes or men,  
I ask Thee now for love divine,  
To purify this heart of mine,  
In Christ's dear name.

I pray that I may learn to be  
Each day a little more like Thee;  
And guide me, Lord, each day to find  
A broken heart to heal and bind,  
In Christ's dear name.

And oh, if I have sinned to-day,  
By word or thought in any way,  
I ask Thee now on bended knee,  
That Thou wilt hear and pardon me,  
In Christ's dear name.

## ROSES

---

Dear heart, there are roses all over the south,  
Some white as your hand, some red as your  
mouth;  
Wherever you wander soft petals uncloze,  
And you smile at the thought that the world is  
a rose.

They climb to your window and peep in your room,  
They crowd to your doorstep, and burst into bloom,  
They scatter soft petals wherever you tread—  
Rose petals, as thick as the stars overhead.

There are roses to group in your tall slender vase,  
There are roses to brighten the invalid's face,  
There are roses to stand at the altar of God,  
There are roses and tears for the grave's holy sod.

And heart, dearest heart, there are roses to give  
To the strong, to the weak, as we toil, as we live;  
I have looked the world over and looked the world  
through,  
And roses and love I am bringing to you.

## LINES TO MY VIOLONCELLO

---

Of all sad instruments that please the ear,  
O low-voiced violin, thou hast no peer!  
Ophelia's tears and Desdemona's wrong  
By thee alone can be expressed in song.  
Thou hast the plaintive notes of Philomel,  
When she at midnight sings in some green dell.  
Thou hast the passion wild of Romeo,  
When he to Juliet declares his woe.  
Of all things musical, thou art my choice,  
O deep-toned violin with sorrow's voice!

Strong fingers, chaste and pure, caressing thee,  
Can conquer savage hearts with melody,  
For thou dost softly answer all commands,  
If given thee by true and loving hands;  
Whate'er the heart of man can strongly feel,  
Oh, thou in fitting music canst reveal.  
The fire that burns within the bosom's core,  
Oh, thou in rhythmic numbers canst outpour!  
What ecstasy, what woe, chaste hands can win  
From thee, from thee, O peerless violin!

In deep obscurity I am content  
To live with thee, my comrade instrument!  
Fame quickly comes and goes, but thou wilt  
    stay  
Until these hands that love thee so are clay.

Thou art not cold to-day, to-morrow kind,  
But sympathy in thee I always find;  
Thy plaintive vibrant voice is ever fraught  
With nameless passion mixed with dreams  
    and thought;  
And dear as life itself thou art to me,  
O violin, O fount of melody!

## AUSTIN DAYS

---

Oh, beautiful, beautiful Austin days,  
You bless me still in countless ways;  
Like birds that come in the early spring  
You come to my heart, and sing and sing!  
Oh, beautiful, beautiful Austin days,  
For very love I voice your praise!

Oh, beautiful, beautiful Austin years,  
You scatter doubts and banish fears;  
The voices of friends you bring along,  
And words of cheer, and laughter and song;  
Oh, beautiful, beautiful Austin years,  
You bring to me both smiles and tears!

Oh, days and years in Austin spent,  
You give me peace and sweet content;  
Like ships that come from over the sea,  
You come from the golden past to me;  
Oh, days and years in Austin spent,  
You give me peace and sweet content!

## SONG FOR THE NEW YEAR

*Written for and Dedicated to my Pupils*

---

Oh, let sweet music overflow your heart,  
As water overflows a marble vase;  
And singing, ever singing, do your part  
To make the world a sweeter, brighter place:—

A sweeter, brighter place in which to live—  
And this is hope enough to thrill the breast;  
A sweeter, brighter place in which to give  
Your very best, and naught except your best.

I never fear too many singing birds  
Will pass my window as they upward soar;  
I never fear too many loving words—  
For this I know: there's always need for more.

Be not afraid to stand and face the light,  
With dreams of good as clear as heaven's ray;  
Be not afraid to view the stars at night,  
With aspirations just as high as they.

Oh, let sweet music overflow your heart,  
As water overflows a marble vase;  
And singing, ever singing, do your part  
To make the world a sweeter, brighter place.

## RESOLUTION

---

'Tis cowardly to shrink and turn away  
From high ideals, because perchance we fail;  
'Tis worse than weak to spend life's golden day,  
In idly watching for a promised sail.

Though all the days of this my little life,  
Be doomed to set in disappointment's night,  
Though all my days and years be spent in strife,  
My soul is still resolved to seek the light.

I laugh at failure, as I laugh at fame;  
They neither prove, nor can the strength of men;  
I seek the truth, the all-inspiring flame,  
That burns the tongue in speech, and guides  
the pen.

I seek the light, because I love the light;  
I work for men, because I love mankind;  
And though I fall sore wounded in the fight,  
I know at last the truth my soul shall find.

## MY STAR

---

Beneath a beautiful star she stands,  
A golden lamp within her hands;  
But over the lamp and under the star,  
There shines a light more glorious far  
Than golden lamp or beautiful star.

The star and lamp are beacons to all,  
When the tremulous curtains of midnight  
fall;  
But over the lamp and under the star,  
There shines a light more glorious far—  
The light of her face—my lamp, my star!

## SONG

---

Oh, the pearls in the caves down under the sea!  
Oh, the caskets of gold in the mountains high!  
Oh, the beautiful visions that fall over me,  
Like golden mists from the starry sky,—  
Oh, the dreams, the dreams, as the years roll by!

I will dive to the pearls down under the sea,  
I will climb to the gold in the mountains high,  
I will treasure the visions that come to me,  
And the dreams that fall from the starry sky;  
I will love, I will sing, as the years roll by.

## AUSTIN BLUE-BONNETS

---

Are the blue-bonnets wearing their bonnets of blue  
In Austin now, as they used to do?  
Are they over the campus and under the hills,  
And up on the mountains and down by the rills?  
Are they waving their beautiful bonnets to-day,  
As if to say, "Come away, come away?"

When the first little bonnets of blue were put on,  
I knew that my hopes for the honors were gone;  
My Shakespeare and Milton, with crochetty heads,  
Were thrown into corners, or under the beds;  
I shouted good-bye to my Shelley and Keats,  
And was off to the hills for their sweeter sweets.

Oh, the joy of it, love of it, glow of it all,  
The earth and the sky and the blue-bonnets small!  
I whistled and danced like a creature insane,  
I opened to nature my heart and my brain;  
Like Siegfried, I talked to the birds of the air;  
Like Buddha, I conquered all sorrow and care.

Where the blue-bonnets bloomed, I knelt on my  
knees—  
I reached for the stars, I hugged the green trees—  
I hugged the green trees, I reached for the stars,  
I broke through all creeds with their fetters and  
bars;

And my comrades they laughed, and my comrades  
they sneered,  
But laughing and sneering I never have feared.

Are the blue-bonnets wearing their bonnets of blue  
In Austin now, as they used to do?  
Are they over the campus and under the hills,  
And up on the mountains and down by the rills?  
Across the years, with their sorrow and gloom,  
I turn my face where the blue-bonnets bloom.

## MEXICAN HOME SONG

---

O sun-kissed land of Manana,  
O rose-blooming garden of rest,  
I come, I come to thy bosom,  
As a dove flies home to its nest!

The world it is vast, it is mighty,  
And its wheels of trade never cease,  
But thou, O land of Manana,  
Art the cradle, the kingdom, of peace.

What a Grecian once felt for his Athens,  
What a Roman once felt for his Rome,  
I feel in my innermost being  
For thee, my Aztec home.

I have sighed for thy skies and thy mountains,  
I have yearned for thy valleys and streams,  
I have wept like a child in the darkness,  
For thine arms, O Mother of Dreams!

Wherever on earth I have wandered,  
At morn, at noon, at night,  
I have turned my face to thy temples,  
As a Persian priest turns to the light.

O beautiful land of Manana,  
O glorious kingdom of rest,  
I come, I come to thy bosom,  
As a dove flies home to its nest!

As a dove flies back to the forest,  
As a dove flies home to its nest,  
O beautiful land of Manana,  
I come, I come to thy breast!

TO \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

'Tis good to see thy strong white hand  
    Outstretched to loose thy brother's band;  
For surely, strong white hands were made  
    For this alone—to help and aid.

'Tis good to see thy firm lips part,  
    With words to cheer thy brother's heart;  
For surely, lips were made to ope  
    With music words of love and hope.

And this is life, ay, this is life—  
    To lessen pain, to lessen strife.  
O friend, this world of misery  
    Has need of thee, and more like thee!

## OPPORTUNITY

---

One half-blown rose, with dewdrops bright,  
Has sweetened all my room;  
One morning ray of golden light  
Has banished all my gloom;  
Oh, may I not do something too,  
To make some life more sweet and true?

One golden-throated bird near by,  
Has filled my heart with song;  
One mountain-peak, majestic, high,  
Has made my soul more strong;  
Oh, may I not, with hand and heart,  
For others do some noble part?

One pregnant word of sympathy  
Has changed my bosom's strife;  
One pure white hand, outheld to me,  
Has changed my path in life;  
Oh, may I not stretch forth again  
My hand in love to other men?

## HOME

---

Where rocks the cradle to and fro,  
And noiseless fingers softly sew,  
Where prayers are said and songs are sung,  
Where loving words are on each tongue,  
Oh, under heaven's sunlit dome,  
There is no place like home, sweet home!

Where roses bloom about the door,  
And sunlight falls across the floor,  
Where reigns a queen by right divine,  
And over all her glories shine,  
Oh, under heaven's sunlit dome,  
There is no place like home, sweet home!

Where God is worshipped morn and night,  
And brows are touched with holy light,  
Where every nation's strength is sure,  
And life and thought are sweet and pure,  
Oh, under heaven's sunlit dome,  
There is no place like home, sweet home!

## CHRISTMAS MORN

---

“A star has led us here,” the wise men said,  
And low they knelt about the humble bed—  
“A star from out the east, and even now  
It stands and shines above this infant’s brow;  
And thus by prophecy and starry sign,  
We know that this is he of David’s line;  
And royal gifts of gold and myrrh we bring,  
To him, the Prince of Peace, the infant King!

“Foretold by prophets old and holy seers,  
He comes to glorify the future years,  
And he shall lead mankind as yonder star  
Has led us here from home and country far.  
What though within a manger rests his head?  
Angelic hosts are singing o’er his bed!  
What though he sleeps within a stable dim?  
The ends of earth shall come and kneel to him!”

The wise men worshipped God, and went their  
way,

Rejoicing on the infant’s natal day,  
And taking up their praises year by year,  
Unnumbered voices sing them far and near;  
They sing them till the globe is circled round,  
With hymns of praise and symphonies of sound,  
They sing them till the world forgets its mart,  
And turns toward Bethlehem with yearning heart.

O brothers, look! The east is like a rose,  
That opens wide and all its crimson shows!  
Behold, behold! The morn is come again!  
The holy morn of peace, good will to men!  
And this is now the day, the chosen time,  
To meditate on all things high, sublime:  
And this the morn to claim your brotherhood  
With all the great of earth, and all the good!

Your golden dreams, O brothers, where are they?—  
Recall and vitalize your dreams to-day;  
And countless hopes with which your days are rife,  
Embody them in action, give them life,  
The kindness meant for other friends and years  
Is needed now, to stay earth's falling tears,  
And lives of gladness, planned for realms above,  
Are needed here, with all their joy and love.

Oh, look across the years to where he lies,  
The Babe of Bethlehem, with smiling eyes,  
And pledge again and dedicate anew  
Your lives to him and all things just and true!  
Oh, look upon the Christ Child newly born,  
And worship God and bless this holy morn!  
Behold, behold! Upon the infant's face  
There shines a love divine for all man's race!

## NEW YEAR

---

Like him who stood on Pisgah's sunlit peak,  
And viewed the land his people were to seek,  
I stand to-day upon the peak of time,  
And view the coming year with hope sublime.

All former years shall render up to me  
Their true account, that I may wiser be;  
Ay, like a casket filled with jewels bright,  
The past shall open wide, and me invite.

The work that lies before me half-begun,  
May yet with love and patience be well done;  
The discords that have wounded many a friend,  
Oh, thanks to God! may yet with music blend.

To-day upon the topmost crag of time,  
I stand and view the world with hope sublime;  
Of all the countless years since time began,  
This year may be the brightest one to man!

## SONG OF TRUST

---

Somehow, somewhere, in regions now unknown,  
All truth, all light, shall be my own, my own!

And though that longed-for goal is distant far,  
There shines before my eyes a guiding star.

Behold the planets how they hang in space,  
Each rolling orb within its own bright place;  
Shall I not trust that God whose hands uphold  
Ten thousand starry worlds of purest gold?

Behold the universe from sun to clod;  
Each atom speaks of God, eternal God!  
Shall I not strive to carry out his plan,  
And stand before his face a perfect man?

Behold, behold this sunlit world of ours,  
With all its joys and cares, its thorns and flowers!  
Shall I not serve its God with hand and heart,  
By nobly doing here and now my part?

Whate'er befalls, my trust in God shall be  
As changeless as his mercy is to me;  
Whate'er befalls, my hands shall labor on,  
For God, for men, until their strength is gone

## THE BLUEBIRD

---

Splashing the dew with vibrant wings,  
The bluebird lights upon the bough  
That shades my window ledge, and sings—  
Ah! hear him now!

Turning his head from side to side,  
And flirting his wing like a delicate fan,  
He warbles of love to his little bride,  
As only he can.

The niche above my window there,  
Just large enough for a tiny nest,  
Is the cozy home of this loving pair,  
Their place of rest.

And if April should ever forget to bring  
My beautiful birds of blue along,  
Alas! there'd be less joy in the spring,  
And for me less song.

## A GIFT

---

A beautiful gift I had to-day,  
From a dear old friend not far away—  
The apple tree at the side of my room  
Through the open window tossed me a  
bloom.

It fluttered in like a butterfly,  
And fell on the poems of Shelley near by,  
And I knew in a flash, as I never had known,  
That beauty somehow will find out its own.

If you doubt my story, just come and look;  
On the table there is the open book,  
And on the book is a delicate bloom,  
The gift of my friend, the tree by my room.

## MY BROTHERS

(*"To all men with working hands and  
singing hearts."*)

---

And is it but an idle theme,  
A poet's hope, a dreamer's dream,  
That we, in our place and time,  
May do and leave some work sublime—  
Some work that even foul decay  
Shall leave untouched, unharmed for aye,  
Some pyramid of tongue or pen,  
That shall exist for future men,  
Some work of love that shall endure,  
To make the unborn ages pure?  
My brothers, O my brothers all,  
To us the past and future call!

Ay, we are heirs of mighty men—  
Of Shakespeare, with his golden pen,  
Of Milton, with his organ keys,  
Who played divinest harmonies,  
Of Burns, whose tender Scottish eye  
Shed tears to see a daisy die,  
Of Browning and his mated dove,  
Who sweetly joined their notes of love;  
And shall we speak their tongue and ours  
Unworthily, with meaner powers?  
And shall we leave undone our part,  
In great affairs, in life, in art?

The past is rich, ay, rich in all  
That men hold dear, both great and small;  
And yet the past has left undone  
Far more to win than it has won.  
E'en Shakespeare did not put in art  
The full deep life of one poor heart;  
E'en Milton did not fully sing  
The beauty of a single spring.  
The world's as new from star to clod  
As when it left the hand of God;  
And brothers, O my brothers all,  
To us these stars, these planets call!

## TO THE MOCKING-BIRD

---

Sing to me tenderly, bird of the night,  
Sing to my passionate heart of delight;  
Tell me the secret of forest and grove,  
Now while the stars in the heavens are bright—  
    Tell me of love.

Deep in the amorous vines overhead,  
Just where the blossoms are red, deepest red,  
There thou art singing of love in the night,  
Soothing thy little ones tucked in their bed,  
    Safe out of sight.

Sweet is thy voice as a Dorian flute,  
Played to the sound of Apollo's own lute;  
Sweet is thy rapturous song of the south,  
Sweet as the wine of a nectarous fruit  
    Pressed to the mouth.

Here in the forest thou reignest alone,  
Carelessly perched on a dew-spangled throne;  
Here thou art first to welcome the spring,  
Thrilling the wood with a ravishing tone;  
    Here thou art king.

## EASTER MORN

*"Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid."—  
Matt. xxviii. 10.*

---

O golden morn, uprising from the sea,  
I fall upon my knees to welcome thee!  
Of all the days that come and go each year,  
Thou art the rightful king, with but one peer.  
The East herself, with fingers chaste and white,  
Hath crowned thee with a crown of jewels bright;  
And drawn about thy shoulders fold on fold,  
The sun hath thrown a robe of dazzling gold;  
But gems and gold are naught, O morn, are  
naught  
Compared with what thy rosy dawn hath brought—  
The Christ, the Christ is risen from the dead,  
And Mary hears his voice, "Be not afraid,"—  
Be not afraid, be not afraid, for lo!  
The grave hath lost its sting and death its woe!

Ten thousand times ten thousand chiming bells,  
Proclaim thy bright approach o'er hills and dells,  
Cathedrals gray with age wide open stand,  
And mighty organs peal with music grand,  
Young boys arrayed in garments long and white  
Are singing with their faces toward the light,  
And thou, O morn, adorned with lilies fair,  
With psalms and prayers art welcomed everywhere;

But bells and chapels, songs and flowers sweet,  
To what thy dawn hath brought are incomplete —  
The Christ, the Christ is risen from the dead,  
And all men hear his voice, “Be not afraid,”—  
Be not afraid, be not afraid, for lo!  
The grave hath lost its sting and death its woe!

## A ROSE FROM ATHENS

---

A rose from Athens—can it be!  
And you—you brought it home to me!  
My friend, Aladdin's lamp or ring  
Could do for me no greater thing.

I touch my Attic rose, and lo!  
It comes—the Greece of long ago!  
I press its leaves—and through the years  
Fair Athens like a star appears!

The marble temples, how they shine!  
How like to men the statues fine!  
The pipes and flutes, oh, how they play—  
In Athens all is joy to-day!

Adown the golden steps of time,  
They come with harps, the bards sublime;  
And through the years their music falls,  
Like water over mountain walls;

The Tragic Three, I feel, I know—  
What heart could doubt their golden flow?—  
This Eschylus, this Sophocles,  
And this and this Euripides!

The flutes again, the harps and flutes,  
And wine goes round, with luscious fruits,

And heroes, sages, artists, all,  
The victories of Greece recall.

But who is yonder man who stands  
Upon the street, with lifted hands?  
'Tis said he blights the Attic youth,—  
Again 'tis said he teaches truth.

The sunlight catches him just now,  
And glorifies his face and brow,  
And o'er the strife and greed for pelf,  
I catch these accents: "Know thyself!"

\* \* \* \* \*

This Attic rose which you have brought,  
Restores the golden age of thought;  
My friend, Aladdin's lamp or ring  
Could do for me no greater thing!

## PROPHECY OF HOPE

---

Although the air is sharp and keen,  
And not a daisy yet is seen,  
I heard far up the dell at noon  
A song bird's clear prophetic tune;  
A prophecy that warmed my blood,  
And told of coming leaf and bud.

I sought in haste the naked tree,  
From which he poured his prophecy,  
And though the winged bard had flown,  
I marveled as I stood alone  
How he could sing of things unseen,  
Of hidden nests in bowers green.

Elijah's voice from Carmel's height  
Was not more fraught with truth and light  
Than was that burst of melody,  
That came through study walls to me;  
And though the whole earth's brown and  
sere,  
I feel, I know sweet spring is near!

## FROM MY WINDOW

---

If you stretch your arm from this window  
ledge,  
Your fingertips will touch my hedge—  
My plum tree hedge; behold it now,  
A million blooms on each small bough;  
A million million blooms are here,  
At your fingertips, to bless and cheer;  
And after all these blooms are gone,  
The miracle will still go on;  
The tiny plums will grow and grow,  
And redden in the sun's warm glow;  
And then, as fingers pluck the lute,  
Your hands shall pluck the ripened fruit.  
If you stretch your arm from this window  
ledge,  
Your fingertips will touch my hedge.

## BOY

---

His old straw hat is torn, I know,  
His feet are bare, and not like snow;  
His sleeves are ripped, his trousers too,  
And here and there white skin peeps  
    through;  
But oh, his eye is bright with joy,—  
He knows no care, he's just a boy.

He passes by an apple stand,  
Nor goes his way with empty hand;  
He skulks, he hides in corners dim,  
He likes few men, and few like him;  
But oh, his eye is bright with joy,—  
He knows no care, he's just a boy.

Beneath the dirt and rags and all,  
He has a heart, not mean, not small;  
And if that heart e'er turns to you,  
You'll find a comrade staunch and true;  
And oh, his eye is bright with joy,—  
He knows no care, he's just a boy.

## TO THE SOUTHLAND

---

My native Southland, thee I sing,  
Whene'er I touch the vibrant string,  
For thou art always near my heart,  
And on my lips in lyric art.

What thou hast wrought beneath the sun  
No other land has ever done;  
From poverty, from black despair,  
Thou hast arisen, stainless, fair.

Thou hast outlived the fiercest strife  
That ever ruffled human life,  
And stately as a southern palm  
Thou standest now, erect and calm.

Defeat thy spirit could not break,  
The grave itself ne'er made thee quake,  
And over all with sunlit brow,  
In beauty, thou art standing now.

Thy sons who proudly wore the gray,  
In history shall live for aye,  
And Lee and Jackson shall be sung  
Where'er in song is heard thy tongue.

\* \* \* \* \*

My native Southland, thee I sing,  
Whene'er I touch the vibrant string,

For thou art always near my heart,  
And on my lips in lyric art.

Ten thousand flowers kiss thy feet,  
Ten thousand vines above thee meet,  
Thy land's an Eden fresh and fair,  
With dew and blossoms everywhere.

Ten thousand feathered poets sing  
About thee now, on outspread wing,  
And clear above them all is heard  
Thy laureate, the mocking-bird.

Thy skies are fair, thy waters sweet,  
Thy realms in beauty seem complete,  
Oh, thou art like thine own white rose,  
That every day some new charm shows.

Among thy tangled gardens fair,  
Thy daughters move with queenly air,  
A song is in each maiden's mouth,  
A song of thee, sweet Sunny South!

\* \* \* \* \*

My native Southland, thee I sing,  
Whene'er I touch the vibrant string,  
For thou art always near my heart,  
And on my lips in lyric art.

I feel, I know, what thou hast wrought  
In great affairs, in art, in thought,

Is but a hint, a prophecy,  
Of what in time shall spring from thee.

E'en now thy fields of cotton white  
Adorn the world in garments bright;  
Thy ships go sailing o'er the sea  
With clothes for all humanity.

E'en now a dusky alien race  
Among thy children finds safe place,  
And thou hast given church and school  
To free their minds from savage rule.

Oh, Southland, gaining height on height,  
Thy course is ever toward the light;  
Advance, advance, thou canst not fall,  
For God, thy God, is over all!

## SONG

---

Oh, give the daisies half a chance,  
And they will bloom beneath your feet,  
And cheer your every earthward glance,  
With up-turned faces fresh and sweet.

Oh, give the birds a friendly look,  
And e'er the summer days go by  
They'll find a chink or window nook,  
And rear their young beneath your eye.

Oh, give this dear old world of ours  
A smile upon its journey long,  
And it will fill your hands with flowers,  
And sweeten all your life with song.

## SING ON

---

Sing on, sweet bird, for overhead  
Concealed among the roses red,  
Thy little mate with wondrous care  
Has made a nest and hung it there;  
Sing on, sing on, the whole day long,  
And cheer her heart with love and song!

Sing on, sweet bird, above my door,  
And over all thy music pour;  
The world has need of every note  
That falls in gladness from thy throat;  
Sing on, sing on, the summer long,  
And cheer the world with love and song!

Sing on, sweet bird, among the flowers,  
Sing on in sunshine and in showers;  
Thy little mate, the world and I,  
Have need of all thy rapture high;  
Sing on, sweet bird, the summer long,  
And cheer our hearts with love and song!

## LINES TO BEAUTY

---

O Beauty, I would be to thee  
A holy priest on bended knee,  
Whose outstretched hand should ever hold  
A burning lamp of purest gold,  
Whose life thy graces should retain,  
As lilies catch and hold the rain,  
Whose heart should answer each command,  
As lute strings heed a master's hand.  
O Beauty, I in life would be  
A priest to serve and worship thee!

Where'er thy royal seal is set,  
On star or heaven-hued violet,  
On spheres that move through space and  
sing,  
Or on the bluebird's outspread wing,  
On woman's brow or man's great heart,  
In nature or in perfect art,  
O Beauty, there my rosary  
With holy lips I'd say to thee!  
Ay, there like Buddha, calm, serene,  
I'd meditate, alone, unseen!

Around the world, from zone to zone,  
I follow thee and thee alone,  
And often like a modest flower,  
I find thee in the humblest bower;

In cottage homes, of men obscure,  
I meet thy glances soft and pure;  
Upon the street, within the mart,  
Thy smiles like sunshine warm my heart;  
Ay, he who seeks for thee with care  
Can find thee, Beauty, everywhere!

Oh, I in life would be to thee,  
A holy priest on bended knee,  
Whose outstretched hand should ever hold  
A burning lamp of purest gold,  
Whose life thy graces should retain,  
As lilies catch and hold the rain,  
Whose heart should answer each command,  
As lute strings heed a master's hand.  
O Beauty, I in life would be  
A priest to serve and worship thee!

## LINES

---

Where nothing was looked for save dust and stone,  
I find at my feet a primrose full blown;  
In the heart of a city where men feel no pity,  
In a niche of the street it blossoms alone.

Where nothing was thought of save gold and its  
    mart,  
I find at my side a friend with a heart;  
In a miserable street where dark figures meet,  
We met, and we knew that we never should part.

Where nothing was hoped for save strife and un-  
    rest;  
I find a wee home, like an oriole's nest;  
It hangs mid the strife of a great city's life,  
But oh, it has comfort and peace for my breast!

## ALBUM LEAF

---

In every word upon this page,  
I've hung a little golden cage,  
And in each cage I've placed for thee  
A warbling bird of poesy.

And when thy glances meet the page,  
I've charged each bird in each gold cage,  
To sing in wildest ecstasy  
My love, Inez, to thee, to thee!

## SONG OF THE IMPRISONED BARD

---

Between four prison walls,  
Where sunlight rarely falls,  
Where heaven's midnight stars  
Shine not between close bars,  
A poet, young and strong,  
Spends all his days in song:

“Can walls, though strongly wrought,  
Shut out my sun of thought?  
Can grated windows tight  
Keep back my star's pure light?  
O, God, all praise to thee,  
That I, though bound, am free!

“Enough that I have seen  
One rose in leaves of green!  
Henceforth the year shall be  
One long sweet June to me,  
And even here shall ope  
The pure white rose of hope!

“Enough that I have heard  
The song of one sweet bird!  
Henceforth within my cell  
The airy throng shall dwell,  
And poised on outspread wing,  
My heart's own bird shall sing!

“Enough that I have known  
One man in love fullgrown!  
Henceforth the pure, the great,  
Upon me here shall wait,  
And on my knees I'll write  
In stone their words of light!

“Enough that Thou wert near,  
When first I entered here!  
Henceforth my cell shall be  
A temple, Lord, to Thee;  
And oh, from grief, from wrong,  
I turn to Thee with song!”

Between four prison walls,  
Where sunlight rarely falls,  
Where heaven's midnight stars  
Shine not between close bars,  
A poet spends his days,  
In thought, in prayer, in praise.

## TO A YOUNG GIRL

---

Pure thou art in mind and heart,  
Pure as lilies wet with dew,  
And thy face reveals thy grace,  
As a glass the light shines through.

Purity envelops thee,  
Like a flowing robe of white,  
And thy brow, I know not how,  
Ever wears a crown of light.

Men confess thy loveliness,  
Viewing thee from near and far,  
And o'er all thy virtues fall,  
Like the beams from some bright star.

Pure thou art in mind and heart,  
Pure as lilies wet with dew,  
And thy face reveals thy grace,  
As a glass the light shines through.

## SUPPOSE

---

Suppose an artist should unroll  
His canvas for a while,  
And paint your life in golden light,  
And tint each frown and smile,  
I wonder if your likeness then  
Would all your tears beguile.

Suppose the merry birds of spring  
Could sing your love in May,  
Suppose the roses could reveal  
The thought you long to say,  
I wonder if the bird and rose  
Would make you sad or gay.

## HONEYSUCKLE

---

A spray of honeysuckle sweet,  
That near my window grew,—  
How thick with blossoms, how complete!  
Inez, it is for you.

My mother loved this humble flower,  
How dear its blossoms were!  
Inez, I broke it from its bower,  
With thoughts of you and her.

My mother's blessing seems to rest  
Upon this golden spray;  
Oh, wear it, love, upon your breast,  
For her dear sake to-day.

How many flowers, fresh with dew,  
White hands have culled for me;  
Inez, I bring this spray to you,  
Entwined with memory.

## HOW A GREAT AND GOOD MAN LIVES

---

A strip of blue above his head,  
A strip of green beneath his feet,  
A friend, a hut, with books and bed—  
He asks no more, his lot seems sweet.

He tills the ground for very love,  
And shares his bread alike with all;  
At peace with man and God above,  
His life is great, his sphere is small.

The poorest beggar pauses oft  
Beside his door, to ask for bread;  
Ay, 'neath his smile, his accent soft,  
A savage e'en would turn his head.

He holds no pencil dipped in light,  
To put in words his manhood free;  
He feels, he knows no need to write,  
For all his days are poetry.

His life is like a mighty tree,  
That fate has planted in a cup;  
And yet he smiles at destiny,  
And lives and toils, still looking up.

## SOUTHERN NOCTURNE

---

From yonder lone mimosa tree,  
There floats a midnight melody,  
That rises through the golden gloom,  
Then nestward sinks where flowers bloom.

The night is like a silent hall,  
From which are gone the people all;  
And he on yonder leafy throne  
Is pouring out his heart alone.

Why sings he now at dead of night,  
Among green leaves with dewdrops bright?  
Are not the days of June full long,  
That he must fill the night with song?

Oh, can it be he sends afar  
His voice, to serenade a star?  
Or can it be—oh, can it be  
He feels the pale moon's witchery?

Does he know now a lover's woe,  
As did the heartsick Romeo,  
Or does he into singing break,  
As poets do, for music's sake?

I know not how, I know not why,  
He sings from yonder tree-top high;

I cannot solve these hidden things,  
But this I know—he sings, he sings!

Perched high upon a moonlit spray,  
He sings as though the night were day;  
And through the roses drawing near,  
I pause beneath his tree to hear.

## A SECRET

---

As I lay on the ground where the apple trees shower  
Their wealth of bloom on the grass below,  
I wondered who tinted each delicate flower,  
And taught the seedlings just how to grow;  
I have wondered long in the twilight gloom  
Who taught the buds to burst into bloom.

As I lay full-length on the grass in the dell,  
A violet pressed its soft face to my cheek,  
And I saw in the graceful curves of its bell  
An art more perfect than modern or Greek;  
I have wondered long what hand had the power  
To pencil with blue the violet flower.

As I lay asleep on a wintry night,  
An artist came to my window there,  
And sketched in delicate rainbow light  
A mystical picture, wonderfully fair;  
I have wondered long who the artist could be;  
I have sought in vain over land, over sea.

At last, I heard in the hush of the night,  
A small, still voice speaking clear unto me:  
"The hand that beckons thy soul to the light,  
Is the hand of love that blossoms the tree.  
The hand that penciled the violet flower,  
Is the hand of God, that has given man power."

## NIGHT

---

I hear the leaves at my window sigh,  
As the wintry winds go moaning by,  
And lying awake in the gloom of night,  
I wish for morn, with its cheering light—  
And the leaves at my window, they fall and  
die.

I hear the rain on my window beat,  
And it sounds like the sound of hurrying feet;  
And lying awake in the starless night,  
I pray for morn, with its hope and its light—  
And the rain on my window is turning to  
sleet.

But over the wind and rain and all,  
I hear the tears of the world as they fall;  
Oh, nations of earth, in the darkness of night,  
Your children are crying for bread and for  
light—  
Can you dream while they weep, can you  
rest while they call?

## HEART OF MINE

---

O sad, complaining heart of mine,  
Dost hear yon bird within his cage?  
His sphere is smaller far than thine,  
And yet, with sweet ecstatic rage  
He hails each morn the rising sun,  
And sings until the day is done.

The world's a narrow cell to him,  
With leafless perch and bloomless swing;  
And yet, within his prison dim  
There's room enough for him to sing;  
His wings are never fully spread,  
But oh, his song mounts overhead!

O sad, impatient heart of mine,  
Dost see the little primrose there?  
Its life is shorter far than thine;  
And yet, with trust in Nature's care,  
It blooms beneath man's very feet,  
And makes his life and labor sweet.

From out a crevice dark and small,  
Upon the street it lifts its face,  
And scatters cheer alike to all  
Who hurry by its lowly place;  
And though a stone is on each side,  
The primrose blooms in all its pride.

And what hast thou, O heart of mine,  
E'er done to make life more complete?  
Hast thou a song, a blossom fine,  
With which to make man's labor sweet?  
Arise! arise! and do thy part,  
Whate'er in life it be, O heart!

## A BIRTHDAY POEM

---

If all the roses ever seen,  
Embowered deep in leaves of green,  
If all were mine upon this morn,  
I'd send to you the reigning queen,  
The fairest rose with not a thorn.

If all the music ever heard  
From yonder peerless mocking-bird,  
Composed a song, and it were mine,  
Without e'en one regretting word  
I'd send to you this song divine.

But having neither one, I send  
A rose of thought to you, my friend,  
And this stray bit of minstrel's art  
Upon your birthday morning penned;  
I found them both within my heart.

## SONG.

---

A feather from an azure wing,  
The summer wind has brought along,  
And while I chase the dainty thing  
I hear again the bluebird's song,  
I see again the bluebird's wing.

A petal from a blossom fair,  
The wind has blown against my face,  
And while I hold my treasure there  
I see again in every place  
June's royal dower, roses fair.

And oh, a little song of love  
The wind is bringing now to me,  
And while I list and gaze above  
I know within my heart 'tis she—  
My singing bird, my rose, my love!

## DEAR HEART

---

Be not afraid, O heart of mine,  
For though the night is dark and long,  
I feel, I know, the sun will shine,  
And morning break with bursts of song;  
Be not afraid, O heart of mine.

The world has never been, dear heart,  
To thee and me a joyous place;  
And yet I love its every part,  
The earth, the sky, the sea, my race;  
Be not afraid, dear patient heart.

If naught but sorrow comes to me,  
If life should prove an endless night,  
I'll fill that night with melody,  
I'll change the darkness into light;  
And O, dear heart, 'tis all for thee!

## MEMORY

---

As I sit at my vine-clad window,  
And write to you, my love,  
The fragrance rare of the roses  
Is wafted down from above;  
And I think of a day at Austin,  
When we your sun-bonnet filled  
With roses, just like these, love,  
And how the mocking-bird trilled.

I, too, have a pair of lovers,  
That build at my window there,  
And all the day long they are singing  
Among the roses fair;  
But I miss the passionate rapture  
Of the singing bird, and the rose,  
For my heart is silent and lonely,  
And my life is saddened with woes.

We both are older and wiser,  
Than when we strolled that day  
Among the flowers at Austin,  
And down through the old garden way;  
But I love to think of the roses,  
All fresh with the morning dew,  
And my life is brighter for the memory  
Of them, my love, and you.

## JUNE

---

You know, do you not, how a vase overflows  
When you thrust in the stem of a great red rose,—  
How the drops of water run down from the top,  
And sparkle like jewels wherever they stop?  
Ah, then you know how the heart overflows,  
When June draws near with her great red rose;  
You know how the heart overflows with song,  
When June with a rose in her hair trips along!

## HIGH NOON

---

You stand midway the golden day,  
Like one waist deep in waving wheat;  
The cool, fresh morn has slipped away,  
But work well done makes high noon sweet.

With weary limbs and beaded brow,  
Oh, pause a while where green trees grow;  
Ripe fruit is hanging on each bough,  
And near at hand pure waters flow.

The day is only half-way done;  
You stand between the morn and night;  
Arise, complete what's well begun!  
O friend, work on, while yet 'tis light!

## A NOCTURNE

---

By the rhythmical flow of a murmuring stream,  
As I wandered alone in the night I heard  
A low, plaintive note from a passionate throat—  
The song of a bird.

To the tremulous sound of accompanying leaves  
A mocking-bird sang its midnight song;  
Enraptured I stood in the heart of the wood,  
I know not how long.

TO————

---

Some day I'll make for thee a golden heart,  
To wear upon thy bosom white and pure,  
And on it, oh, I'll trace with perfect art  
These words that shall forevermore endure:  
"Sweetheart, when thou art near me I rejoice,  
Because thou art so dear, so very dear;  
When thou art gone, sweetheart, I still rejoice,  
For e'en in absence thou art always near!"

## MY CREED

---

Between my shutters fast and tight,  
There steals each morn a ray of light,  
And sparkling like a jewel rare,  
It scatters sunshine here and there.

Oh, I in life to men would be  
What e'en this sunbeam is to me!  
I'd enter lives as black as night,  
And change their darkness into light!

## AUTUMN VIOLETS

---

Autumn's first violets, sprinkled with dew,  
See, love, I've gathered a handful for you.  
Deep in their green leaves, close to the ground,  
Early this morning these darlings I found—  
Take them, sweetheart, these violets blue.

Often before have I gathered them here,  
Autumn and spring, for many a year;  
But now they are fairer and sweeter to me  
Than ever I thought even flowers could be;  
Take them, sweetheart, these violets dear.

These are my messengers, modest and true—  
See, love, I've gathered a handful for you;  
This is the reason I value them more,  
And love them e'en stronger than ever before—  
Take them, sweetheart, these violets blue.

## TO INEZ

---

A bird is singing through the night,  
Among green leaves with dewdrops bright;  
Inez, e'en so you sing to me,  
And fill my life with melody!

A star is at my window now,  
Its silvery ray is on my brow;  
Inez, e'en so you shine on me,  
And give me light by which to see!

Inez, Inez, my bird of song,  
For you I will be true and strong!  
Inez, Inez, my star of light,  
For you I'll guide my steps aright!

## TO MY HARP

---

With fingers soft as thistledown,  
O harp, I'd pluck your golden strings,  
For everywhere through lane and town  
I see the growth of tender things;  
The peach tree standing near my room  
E'en now is bursting into bloom.

With fingers dipped in morning dew,  
O harp, I'd pluck your golden strings,  
For overhead the sky is blue,  
And underfoot the daisy springs;  
I seek the wood, and everywhere  
A nameless rapture fills the air.

With fingers taught by love alone,  
O harp, I'd pluck your golden strings,  
For back my lady's blinds are thrown,  
And at her window now she sings;  
The swallow's come, the sky is clear,  
And spring, sweet spring, is here, is here!

## AUTUMN VIOLETS

---

Upon my knees, among the leaves and dew,  
I gathered these sweet violets for you;  
Autumnal violets, that somehow bring  
A second and a sadder, sweeter spring.

I search for them when forest leaves turn red,  
And flame like crimson banners overhead;  
I press the leaves aside, and at my feet  
I find their azure blossoms fresh and sweet.

At sunrise when the leaves were wet with dew,  
These fragrant violets I culled for you;  
Autumnal violets, that somehow bring  
A second and a sadder, sweeter spring.

## JULIETTE

---

Oh, what is purer than a lily snow-white,  
As it sways to and fro in the stream?  
Oh, what is deeper than a poet's delight,  
As he sings to the stars his dream?  
Only this,—my Juliette's beautiful hand  
Is purer than the white lilies are;  
Only this,—my Juliette's voice can command  
Richer tones than the poet's guitar.

Oh, what is fairer than a rose in June,  
Full-blown in the leaves and the dew?  
Oh, what is sweeter than the wild bird's tune,  
As it sings the summer day through?  
Only this,—my Juliette's delicate mouth  
Is fairer than a rose in June;  
Only this,—my Juliette's song of the south  
Is sweeter than the sweetest bird's tune!

## MY POET

---

The sun is not risen, the east is not red,—  
Who moves at my window, who stirs at my  
head?  
Who rustles the leaves and splashes the dew?  
My poet, my bard, is it you,—is it you?

Who opens soft pinions against the flowers,  
And scatters the dew on the grass in showers?  
Who watches for morn like a Persian priest,  
And hails the first ray that is seen in the east?

Oh, wonderful bird! Oh, rhapsodist true!  
One note is enough to proclaim it is you!  
One burst of glad song is enough to disclose  
That the heart of the east is as red as a rose!

Like showers of rain when April is near,  
Your melodies fall, refreshing me here;  
And covered with music and buried in song,  
My heart is reliant, my soul it is strong!

Enraptured, inspired, one hope is supreme—  
One beautiful hope, one glorious dream:  
The song you are singing, I'd sing it again,—  
The joy you are giving, I'd give it to men!

Then sing you! Then sing you! Around the  
globe;

The sun is outspreading his golden robe.  
Then sing you! Then sing you! in all of  
your pride—  
My window is open, my heart is thrown wide!

## LOVE SONG

---

My pearly shells, though inland far,  
Unto the sea still loyal are,  
And o'er and o'er they sing to me  
A song of their beloved sea.

Each shell I hold unto my ear,  
Its own pathetic note to hear;  
But whether large or whether small,  
The ocean is the theme of all.

Inez, Inez, I sing of you,  
As seashells sing of waters blue,  
And oh, no song can be complete,  
Without your image pure and sweet!

## TOMORROW.

---

Because thy harp seems out of tune to-day,  
Oh, wouldst thou snap its vibrant strings apart?  
Be patient, friend, but put thy harp away,—  
To-morrow it will thrill and cheer thy heart.

To-morrow thou canst better understand  
'Twas not thy harp that failed thee with a song;  
To-morrow it will sing beneath thy hand,  
And prove to thee that thou thyself wert wrong.

Because thy dearest friend seems cold to-day,  
Oh, wouldst thou tear thy life from his apart:  
Be patient, friend, but put thy haste away,—  
To-morrow he will cheer and warm thy heart.

To-morrow thou wilt feel and understand  
That thou hast done thy friend a cruel wrong;  
To-morrow he will come with outstretched hand,  
And clasp thee to his heart in friendship strong.

Because thy love for Christ seems weak to-day,  
Oh, wouldst thou from his mercy stand apart?  
Be patient, friend, but put thy doubt away,—  
To-morrow thou shalt love with all thy heart.

To-morrow thou wilt feel and understand  
That he who walked by Galilee is strong;  
To-morrow thou wilt kiss the wounded hand  
Outstretched in love above the world's great  
throng.

## THE OLD YEAR

---

I sing to the old year, and not to the new;  
The old is my comrade, faithful and true;  
The new is a stranger to me as yet;  
The old is my comrade, too dear to forget.

## THROUGH THE YEAR

---

Inez, Inez, when March forgets  
To fringe your path with violets,  
When April sunshine fails to bring  
The bluebird back on outspread wing,  
When lavish May grows miserly,  
And tempts no more the roving bee—  
Oh, then, but not till then, dear heart,  
Your little hand from mine shall part!

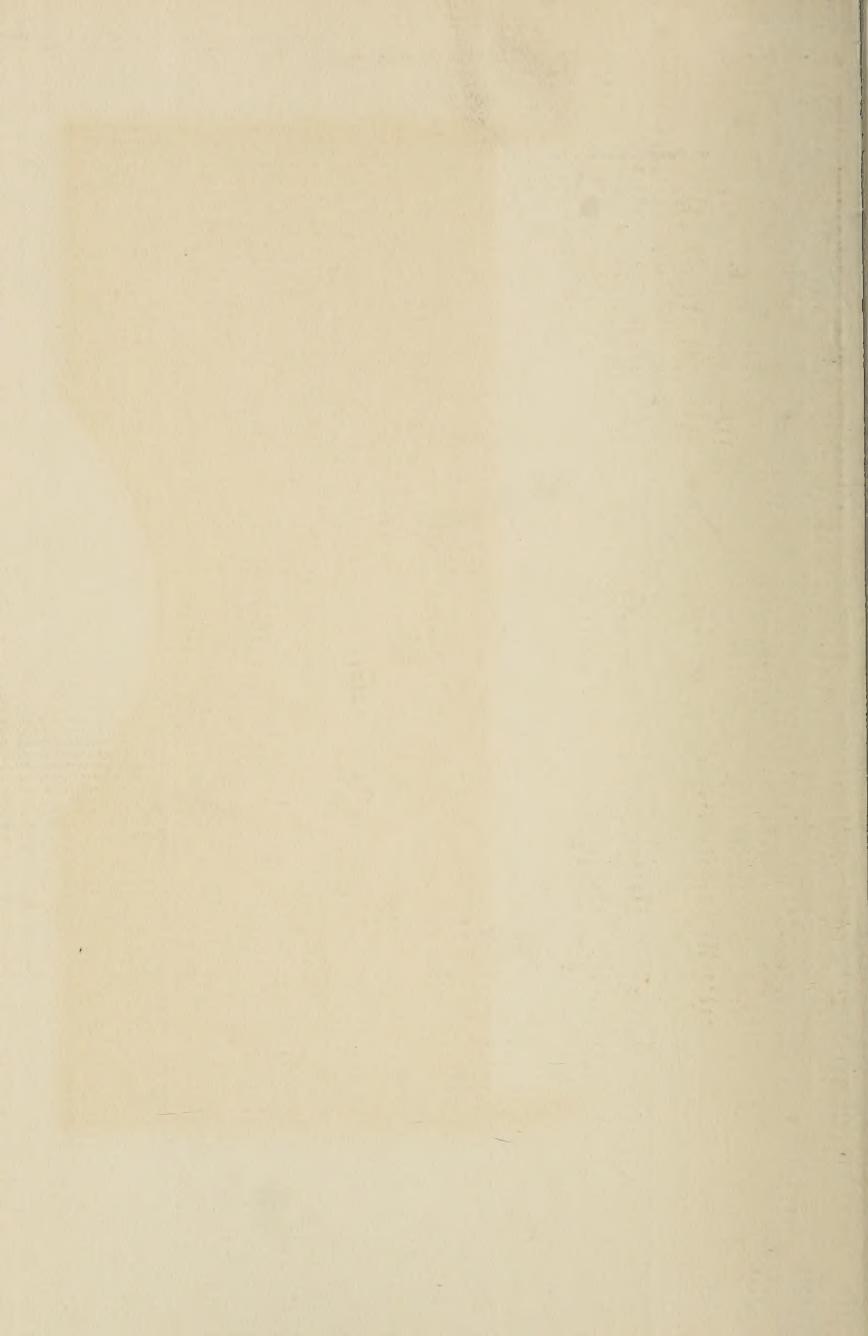
Inez, Inez, when June's red rose  
No longer near your window blows,  
When hot July can offer you  
No cool green melon wet with dew,  
When August fails to stretch her hand  
To bless with plenty all the land—  
Oh, then, but not till then, sweet one,  
Your sunlit path from mine shall run!

Inez, Inez, when wise September  
The schoolboys' books cannot remember,  
When grave October's hand forgets  
To cull the last sweet violets,  
When sad November fails to see  
A crimson leaf on bush or tree—  
Oh, then, Inez—oh, then your face  
Will cease to cheer life's darkest place!

Inez, Inez, when bleak December  
Upon the hearthstone lights no ember,  
When January fails to throw  
Around the world a robe of snow,  
When February turns to June,  
And hangs on high a summer moon—  
Oh, then, but not till then, white dove,  
Will I be false to you, to love!







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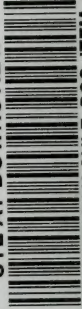
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